



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON 25

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Mr. John K. Hall
35 Kenwood Terrace
Route 3
Robertson, Missouri

Dear Mr. Hall:

Reference is made to your letter dated August 6, 1957, concerning your indebtedness to the United States in the amount of \$68.98, for the excess cost of transportation of your household effects from Akron, Ohio, to St. Louis, Missouri.

By orders dated December 21, 1953, you were relieved from duty at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, effective January 5, 1954 [1954], on which date your resignation as Captain, United States Air Force, was accepted, and you were ordered to proceed to your home of record, or place of appointment, as elected by you. Pursuant to your application dated January 22, 1954, in which you agreed to pay all costs not authorized by regulations, your household effects and professional books were packed and shipped by van from Akron, Ohio, to St. Louis, Missouri, on Government bill of lading No. AT-1600560, dated January 26, 1954, issued to United Van Lines, Inc. The shipment is reported to have weighed 10,760 pounds, including 100 pounds of professional books, for which shipment the Government has made payment of \$666.44. That weight exceeded by 1,735 pounds your weight allowance of 9,025 pounds, including professional books, as prescribed in paragraphs 6001 and 6002, Joint Travel Regulations. The excess weight resulted in an overpayment by the Government of \$66.97, for which you are indebted to the United States, plus three percent transportation tax of \$2.01, or a total indebtedness of \$68.98.

It appears to us your contention that you are not liable for the excess weight on the basis that such weight was the approximate weight of 1-1/3 cord of wood and an auto trailer which the movers loaded on the van after telling your wife, you not being present, that the shipment without the wood and the trailer would be under your authorized weight allowance. The Air Force authorized the United Van Lines, Inc., to move your household effects to St. Louis, Missouri, pursuant to your request that this service be rendered by

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the Government. In these circumstances, it was your responsibility, at the risk of having to bear personally the cost of transportation, to turn over for shipment only such items as properly might be classified as household effects. Cordwood and a trailer obviously are not household effects. Applicable regulations specifically prohibit shipment of trailers at Government expense. Thus, even though it should be established that the excess weight of your shipment represented the weight of the cordwood and trailer shipped, such fact would afford no legal basis for relieving you from payment of the excess costs incurred.

The regulations cited above provide that household effects of service personnel not in excess of the weight limits prescribed may be shipped at Government expense. The regulations set forth the weight allowances for the various ranks and grades and contemplate the shipment at Government expense of household goods at not to exceed the prescribed weight allowances. Weights exceeding the maximum weights are properly chargeable against the shipper. Since the maximum weight allowance prescribed for your rank was 8,925 pounds, exclusive of professional books, you properly are indebted to the United States in the amount of \$68.98.

Accordingly, you are requested to remit the sum of \$68.98 within thirty days from the date of this decision or, within that time, make suitable arrangements for the liquidation of your indebtedness. Such sum should be remitted to us by check, draft or money order, payable to the U. S. General Accounting Office, Post Office Box 2610, Washington 13, D. C.

Very truly yours,

FRANK H. _____

Assistant Comptroller General
of the United States